MODULE 15: ORAL HEALTH ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Oral Health Across the Lifespan
Part 2: Oral Health For Pregnant Women and Their Newborns

Julia Lange Kessler, CM, DNP, FACNM
Assistant Professor & Program Director:
Nurse Midwifery/WHNP Program
Georgetown School of Nursing and Health Studies
Objectives

Upon completing this module students will be able to:

• Discuss the importance of oral systemic health during pregnancy and post partum
• Describe the possible effects of poor oral health on the health of the mother/baby dyad and understand the safety of treatment.
• Evaluate the need for dental referrals during pregnancy.
Healthy People 2020 Objectives

- Reduce the proportion of adults with untreated dental decay
- Reduce the proportion of children and adolescents who have dental caries experiences in their primary or permanent teeth
- Reduce the proportion of adults who have ever had a permanent tooth extracted because of dental caries or periodontal disease
TREATABLE oral systemic health problems are common in pregnant women and have increased significance for the overall health of both mother and baby.
Pregnancy Facts:

- In the United States, almost half (47%) of women who recently gave birth have not had a dental visit in the past year.
- Approximately 1 out of 5 (18%) have never had their teeth cleaned-ever.
- Overall 86% of women do not visit a dentist during pregnancy.
- 40% of pregnant women have some form of periodontal disease.
Common Oral Health Problems During Pregnancy

- Gingivitis
- Periodontitis
- Tooth Decay (Caries)
- Enamel Erosion from Vomiting or Reflux
- Pregnancy Granuloma
Gingivitis & Periodontitis

Gingivitis affects 25 - 75% of pregnant women.

Periodontitis is a severe form of gum disease causing destruction of gums and bones leading to tooth loss.

You don’t have to lose a tooth with each pregnancy!
Untreated Periodontitis

Bacteria from the mothers’ mouth can reach the systemic blood stream and consequently reach the baby. When left untreated it may be associated with:

- Pre Term Labor
- Pre Term Birth
- Poor glycemic control
Enamel Erosion & Pregnancy Granuloma

- **EE**: Caused by vomiting or reflux & can be reduced by having woman rinse with water or water with baking soda after vomiting.

- **Granuloma**: 5-10% of pregnant women are affected.
  - Usually resolves itself after delivery.
  - If bleeding or problems with chewing occur, refer for removal.

- **Caries**: Mothers with high rates of caries are more likely to have children with high rates of caries.
Pregnancy may be the only time that dental care is covered by a public insurance dental benefit.

- Keep the pregnancy healthy by keeping the pregnant mouth healthy!
- Consistent and regular dental visits are key especially important during pregnancy.
- It is not only safe to see the dentist, it is the right choice for mother and baby!
- Get to know the dentists in your area and refer all pregnant women!
During the postpartum period...

- All new Moms want to be good Moms!
- Good oral health habits can start on day one of life!
- A clean wet cloth or gauze will work well to clean the newborn’s mouth after feeding.
- Starting this habit early will make the transition to brushing easier.
- If Mom has good oral health, so will her child and need not suffer from cavities that are totally PREVENTABLE!
ALL Health Workers...

Can educate pregnant women about the safety and IMPORTANCE of dental care during pregnancy for both her and HER BABY. Helping a mother to find a dentist and to refer her is not only safe but will protect the health of the mother/baby dyad.
Optimal dental care during pregnancy:

- First dental screening visit ASAP (if no visit in the last 6 months).
- Dental treatments can occur during all three trimesters!
- Dental x-rays as needed with the use of a lead apron on abdomen and thyroid.
- Lidocaine & Nitrous Oxide are safe for pain relief.
- Fluoride, Xylitol & Chlorhexidine are safe.
- Commonly used antibiotics are safe: Penicillin, Amoxicillin, Erythromycin, and Clindamycin
What to avoid during pregnancy

- Limit sweet snacks or drinks between meals
- Third trimester: Ibuprofen, Oxycodone and Codeine
- Procaine
To summarize:

- A healthy mouth contributes to a healthy pregnancy!
- ALL pregnant woman should see a dentist and it is safe to do so!
- Educating a new Mom on how to care for herself and her new baby can help them to avoid much pain and suffering.
- The dentist is NOT the enemy but dental disease left untreated can have profound effects on both mother and baby!!!
References


References


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